|  |
| --- |
| August 2020 NL Masthead  Having trouble viewing this email? [View it as a Web page](https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USFSA/bulletins/299b839).   * [USDA Announces More Eligible Commodities for CFAP](#link_7) * [USDA Offers Annual Installment Deferral Option for Farm Storage Facility Loan Borrowers](#link_6) * [USDA Launches New Farmers.gov Features to Help Farmers Hire Workers](#link_1) * [Reminders for FSA Direct and Guaranteed Borrowers with Real Estate Security](#link_3) * [Preauthorized Debit Available for Farm Loan Borrowers](#link_4) * [Applying for FSA Guaranteed Loans](#link_5) * [One-Time PLC Yield Updates – Deadline September 30](#link_2)  Maine FSA Newsletter August 2020 |
| |  |  | | --- | --- | | Maine Farm Service Agency 967 Illinois Ave, Suite 2  Bangor, ME  04401  207-990-9140  [www.fsa.usda.gov/me](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.fsa.usda.gov%2Fme%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=02%7C01%7C%7C09aa8bfa744443e123da08d8438d0256%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C637333620189838273&sdata=FD0BJEnJ3pIp9ARQUx5a%2FVR71aq9FlrMWXITVVnoBdM%3D&reserved=0)  **State Executive Director:**  David R. Lavway, SED  **State Committee:**  Sue McCrum  Heath Miller  Nancy Ricker  Dave Tuttle  Fred Flewelling  To find contact information for your local office go to [www.fsa.usda.gov/me](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.fsa.usda.gov%2Fme%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=02%7C01%7C%7C09aa8bfa744443e123da08d8438d0256%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C637333620189848261&sdata=VThS1ov9kXPHuiuLwq65qdVBr8peeEWt%2F4H5IZVBZIM%3D&reserved=0) | USDA Announces More Eligible Commodities for CFAP **Application Deadline Extended to Sept. 11, and Producers Who Have Approved Applications to Receive Final Payments**  **(Washington, D.C., Aug. 11, 2020)** – U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue announced today that additional commodities are covered by the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) in response to public comments and data. Additionally, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is extending the deadline to apply for the program to September 11th, and producers with approved applications will receive their final payment. After reviewing over 1,700 responses, even more farmers and ranchers will have the opportunity for assistance to help keep operations afloat during these tough times.  “President Trump is standing with America’s farmers and ranchers to ensure they get through this pandemic and continue to produce enough food and fiber to feed America and the world. That is why he authorized this $16 billion of direct support in the CFAP program and today we are pleased to add additional commodities eligible to receive much needed assistance,” **said Secretary Perdue**. “CFAP is just one of the many ways USDA is helping producers weather the impacts of the pandemic. From deferring payments on loans to adding flexibilities to crop insurance and reporting deadlines, USDA has been leveraging many tools to help producers.”  **Background:**  USDA collected comments and supporting data for consideration of additional commodities through June 22, 2020. The following additional commodities are now eligible for CFAP:   * **Specialty Crops -** aloe leaves, bananas, batatas, bok choy, carambola (star fruit), cherimoya, chervil (french parsley), citron, curry leaves, daikon, dates, dill, donqua (winter melon), dragon fruit (red pitaya), endive, escarole, filberts, frisee, horseradish, kohlrabi, kumquats, leeks, mamey sapote, maple sap (for maple syrup), mesculin mix, microgreens, nectarines, parsley, persimmons, plantains, pomegranates, pummelos, pumpkins, rutabagas, shallots, tangelos, turnips/celeriac, turmeric, upland/winter cress, water cress, yautia/malanga, and yuca/cassava. * **Non-Specialty Crops and Livestock -** liquid eggs, frozen eggs and all sheep. Only lambs and yearlings (sheep less than two years old) were previously eligible. * **Aquaculture -** catfish, crawfish, largemouth bass and carp sold live as foodfish, hybrid striped bass, red drum, salmon, sturgeon, tilapia, trout, ornamental/tropical fish, and recreational sportfish. * **Nursery Crops and Flowers -** nursery crops and cut flowers.   Other changes to CFAP include:   * Seven commodities – onions (green), pistachios, peppermint, spearmint, walnuts and watermelons – are now eligible for Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Stability (CARES) Act funding for sales losses. Originally, these commodities were only eligible for payments on marketing adjustments. * Correcting payment rates for onions (green), pistachios, peppermint, spearmint, walnuts, and watermelons.   Additional details can be found in the Federal Register in the [Notice of Funding Availability](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fs3.amazonaws.com%2Fpublic-inspection.federalregister.gov%2F2020-17781.pdf%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=02%7C01%7C%7C09aa8bfa744443e123da08d8438d0256%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C1%7C637333620189848261&sdata=CkpQ6XobZU2oXARX6kGgEKjLgQDQm%2BksCio%2FtGLx8po%3D&reserved=0) and [Final Rule Correction](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fs3.amazonaws.com%2Fpublic-inspection.federalregister.gov%2F2020-17780.pdf%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=02%7C01%7C%7C09aa8bfa744443e123da08d8438d0256%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C1%7C637333620189858255&sdata=q1TQ6kphFnGuEQWwiZIGryerQn0e7f3jLeeZdenZj%2Fc%3D&reserved=0) and at [www.farmers.gov/cfap](http://www.farmers.gov/cfap?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery).  **Producers Who Have Applied:**  To ensure availability of funding, producers with approved applications initially received 80 percent of their payments. The Farm Service Agency (FSA) will automatically issue the remaining 20 percent of the calculated payment to eligible producers. Going forward, producers who apply for CFAP will receive 100 percent of their total payment, not to exceed the payment limit, when their applications are approved.  **Applying for CFAP:**  Producers, especially those who have not worked with FSA previously, are recommended to call 877-508-8364 to begin the application process. An FSA staff member can help producers start their application during the phone call.  On [farmers.gov/cfap](https://www.farmers.gov/cfap/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery), producers can:   * Download the AD-3114 application form and manually complete the form to submit to their local USDA Service Center by mail, electronically or by hand delivery to their local office or office drop box. * Complete the application form using the CFAP Application Generator and Payment Calculator. This Excel workbook allows customers to input information specific to their operation to determine estimated payments and populate the application form, which can be printed, then signed and submitted to their local USDA Service Center. * If producers have login credentials known as eAuthentication, they can use the online CFAP Application Portal to certify eligible commodities online, digitally sign applications and submit directly to the local USDA Service Center.   All other eligibility forms, such as those related to adjusted gross income and payment information, can be downloaded from [farmers.gov/cfap](http://www.farmers.gov/cfap/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery). For existing FSA customers, these documents are likely already on file.  All USDA Service Centers are open for business, including some that are open to visitors to conduct business in person by appointment only. All Service Center visitors wishing to conduct business with FSA, Natural Resources Conservation Service or any other Service Center agency should call ahead and schedule an appointment. Service Centers that are open for appointments will pre-screen visitors based on health concerns or recent travel, and visitors must adhere to social distancing guidelines. Visitors are also required to wear a face covering during their appointment. Our program delivery staff will be in the office, and they will be working with our producers in the office, by phone and using online tools. More information can be found at [farmers.gov/coronavirus](http://www.farmers.gov/coronavirus?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery). USDA Offers Annual Installment Deferral Option for Farm Storage Facility Loan Borrowers To assist Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) borrowers experiencing financial hardship from the pandemic and other challenges in production agriculture, USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA) is offering a one-time annual installment payment deferral option. No fees or prepayment penalties apply for borrowers who choose this FSFL loan flexibility option.  Eligible borrowers can request a one-time only annual installment payment deferral for loans having terms of three, five, seven or ten years. The installment deferral option is not available for 12-year term loans.  The FSFL installment payments will remain the same, except for the last year.  The original loan interest rate and annual payment due date will remain the same. However, because the installment payment deferral is a one-year loan term extension, the final payment will be higher due to additional accrued interest.  Borrowers interested in exercising the one-time annual installment deferral option should contact FSA to make the request and to obtain, complete and sign required forms.  FSFLs provide low-interest financing for producers to store, handle and transport eligible commodities.  **More Information**  In addition to offering flexibilities for FSFLs, FSA has also made other flexibilities to help producers impacted by the pandemic, including relaxing the loan-making process for farm operating and ownership loans and implementing the Disaster Set-Aside provision that enables an upcoming installment on a direct loan to be set aside for the year. More information on these flexibilities can be found at [farmers.gov/coronavirus](http://www.farmers.gov/coronavirus?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery).  All USDA Service Centers are open for business, including some that are open to visitors to conduct business in person by appointment only. All Service Center visitors wishing to conduct business with the FSA, Natural Resources Conservation Service or any other Service Center agency should call ahead and schedule an appointment. Service Centers that are open for appointments will pre-screen visitors based on health concerns or recent travel, and visitors must adhere to social distancing guidelines. Visitors may also be required to wear a face covering during their appointment. Field work will continue with appropriate social distancing. Our program delivery staff will be in the office, and they will be working with our producers in office, by phone and using online tools. More information can be found at [farmers.gov/coronavirus](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?data=02%7C01%7C%7C4b8c256ca7934c1f110108d8398eb7d1%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C637322632432324331&reserved=0&sdata=Bh%2FM6%2BGHwQnSGQ%2BpF0lM0AcmuU9HjxxPXvNYdWapES0%3D&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.farmers.govcoronavirus%2F&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery).  For more information, contact your local USDA Service Center. To locate your local FSA office, visit [farmers.gov/service-center-locator](https://www.farmers.gov/service-center-locator?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery). USDA Launches New Farmers.gov Features to Help Farmers Hire Workers U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced new features on the [farmers.gov](http://www.farmers.gov/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery) website designed to help facilitate the employment of H-2A workers.  USDA’s goal is to help farmers navigate the complex H-2A program that is administered by Department of Labor, Department of Homeland Security, and the State Department so hiring a farm worker is an easier process.  The primary new H-2A features on Farmers.gov include:   * A real-time dashboard that enables farmers to track the status of their eligible employer application and visa applications for temporary nonimmigrant workers; * Streamlining the login information so if a farmer has an existing login.gov account they can save multiple applications tracking numbers for quick look-up at any time; * Enables easy access to the Department of Labor’s (DOL) Foreign Labor Application Gateway (FLAG); * Allows farmers to track time-sensitive actions taken in the course of Office of Foreign Labor Certification’s (OFLC) adjudication of temporary labor certification applications; * Allowing for farmers to access all application forms on-line.   All information can be found at [www.farmers.gov/manage/h2a](http://www.farmers.gov/manage/h2a?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery).  In 2018, [Secretary Perdue unveiled farmers.gov](https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2018/02/01/perdue-unveils-farmersgov-interactive-website-agricultural?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery), a dynamic, mobile-friendly public website combined with an authenticated portal where customers can apply for programs, process transactions and manage accounts. With feedback from customers and field employees who serve those customers, [farmers.gov](http://www.farmers.gov/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery) delivers farmer-focused features through an agile, iterative process to deliver the greatest immediate value to America’s agricultural producers – helping farmers and ranchers do right, and feed everyone. | |
| Reminders for FSA Direct and Guaranteed Borrowers with Real Estate Security Farm loan borrowers who have pledged real estate as security for their Farm Service Agency (FSA) direct or guaranteed loans are responsible for maintaining loan collateral. Borrowers must obtain prior consent or approval from FSA or the guaranteed lender for any transaction that affects real estate security. These transactions include, but are not limited to:   * Leases of any kind * Easements of any kind * Subordinations * Partial releases * Sales   Failure to meet or follow the requirements in the loan agreement, promissory note, and other security instruments could lead to nonmonetary default which could jeopardize your current and future loans.  It is critical that borrowers keep an open line of communication with their FSA loan staff or guaranteed lender when it comes to changes in their operation. For more information on borrower responsibilities, read [Your FSA Farm Loan Compass](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.fsa.usda.gov%2FAssets%2FUSDA-FSA-Public%2Fusdafiles%2FFarm-Loan-Programs%2Fpdfs%2Floan-servicing%2Ffarm_loan_compass_9-22-17.pdf%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=02%7C01%7C%7C09aa8bfa744443e123da08d8438d0256%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C1%7C637333620189868253&sdata=rs7ii4Eox59QdfSiKR5aVkKMB4ACs5rb6a8EkgiIcxY%3D&reserved=0). Preauthorized Debit Available for Farm Loan Borrowers USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA) has implemented pre-authorized debit (PAD) for Farm Loan Program (FLP) borrowers. PAD is a voluntary and alternative method for making weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, quarterly, semi-annual or annual payments on loans.  PAD payments are pre-authorized transactions that allow the National Financial and Accounting Operations Center (NFAOC) to electronically collect loan payments from a customer’s account at a financial institution.  PAD may be useful if you use nonfarm income from regular wages or salary to make payments on loans or adjustment offers or for payments from seasonal produce stands. PAD can only be established for future payments.  To request PAD, customers, along with their financial institution, must fill out form RD 3550-28. This form has no expiration date, but a separate form RD 3550-28 must be completed for each loan to which payments are to be applied. A fillable form can be accessed on the USDA Rural Development (RD) website at [rd.usda.gov/publications/regulations-guidelines](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.rd.usda.gov%2Fpublications%2Fregulations-guidelines%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=02%7C01%7C%7C09aa8bfa744443e123da08d8438d0256%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C637333620189868253&sdata=GIIUBTH5m%2BhGlH8%2BzLWoM2mH%2BIbNd90X87goQZQ2PQY%3D&reserved=0). Click forms and search for “Form 3550-28.”  If you have a “filter” on the account at your financial institution, you will need to provide the financial institution with the following information: Origination ID: 1220040804, Agency Name: USDA RD DCFO.  PAD is offered by FSA at no cost. Check with your financial institution to discuss any potential cost. Preauthorized debit has no expiration date, but you can cancel at any time by submitting a written request to your local FSA office. If a preauthorized debit agreement receives three payment rejections within a three-month period, the preauthorized debit agreement will be cancelled by FSA. The payment amount and due date of your loan is not affected by a cancellation of preauthorized debit. You are responsible to ensure your full payment is made by the due date.  For more information about PAD, contact your local county office or visit [fsa.usda.gov](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.fsa.usda.gov%2F%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=02%7C01%7C%7C09aa8bfa744443e123da08d8438d0256%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C637333620189878243&sdata=%2BrLCpjEPoi3bS10aU0%2F9zchx%2FdFutyZ6Xk0GEOxAcrg%3D&reserved=0).   Applying for FSA Guaranteed Loans FSA guaranteed loans allow lenders to provide agricultural credit to farmers who do not meet the lender's normal underwriting criteria. Farmers and ranchers apply for a guaranteed loan through a lender, and the lender arranges for the guarantee. FSA can guarantee up to 95 percent of the loss of principal and interest on a loan. Guaranteed loans can be used for both farm ownership and operating purposes.  Guaranteed farm ownership loans can be used to purchase farmland, construct or repair buildings, develop farmland to promote soil and water conservation or to refinance debt.  Guaranteed operating loans can be used to purchase livestock, farm equipment, feed, seed, fuel, farm chemicals, insurance and other operating expenses.  FSA can guarantee farm ownership and operating loans up to $1,776,000. Repayment terms vary depending on the type of loan, collateral and the producer's ability to repay the loan. Operating loans are normally repaid within seven years and farm ownership loans are not to exceed 40 years.  For more information on guaranteed loans, contact your local county office  or visit [fsa.usda.gov](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.fsa.usda.gov%2F%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=02%7C01%7C%7C09aa8bfa744443e123da08d8438d0256%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C637333620189878243&sdata=%2BrLCpjEPoi3bS10aU0%2F9zchx%2FdFutyZ6Xk0GEOxAcrg%3D&reserved=0).   One-Time PLC Yield Updates – Deadline September 30 Farm owners have a one-time opportunity to update PLC yields of covered commodities on the farm, regardless of Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC)program election. The deadline to request a PLC yield update is September 30, 2020.  The updated yield will be equal to 90 percent of the average yield per planted acre in crop years 2013-2017 (excluding any year where the applicable covered commodity was not planted), subject to the ratio obtained by dividing the 2008-2012 average national yield by the 2013-2017 average national yield for the covered commodity. If the reported yield in any year is less than 75 percent of the 2013-2017 average county yield, then the yield will be substituted with 75 percent of the county average yield.  The chart below provides the ratio obtained by dividing the 2008-2012 average national yield by the 2013-2017 average national yield for each covered commodity.   |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Covered Commodity** | **National Yield Factor** | | Barley | 0.9437 | | Canola | 0.9643 | | Chickpeas, Large | 1.0000 | | Chickpeas, Small | 0.9760 | | Corn | 0.9000 | | Crambe | 1.0000 | | Flaxseed | 1.0000 | | Grain Sorghum | 0.9077 | | Lentils | 1.0000 | | Mustard Seed | 0.9460 | | Oats | 0.9524 | | Peanuts | 0.9273 | | Peas, Dry | 0.9988 | | Rapeseed | 1.0000 | | Rice, Long | 0.9330 | | Rice, Medium | 0.9887 | | Rice, Temp Japonica | 0.9591 | | Safflower | 1.0000 | | Seed Cotton | 0.9000 | | Sesame Seed | 0.9673 | | Soybeans | 0.9000 | | Sunflower Seed | 0.9396 | | Wheat | 0.9545 |     It is the owner’s choice whether to update or keep existing PLC yields.  If a yield update is not made, then no action is required to maintain the existing PLC yield.  An existing or updated PLC yield will be maintained and effective for crop years 2020 through 2023 (life of the 2018 Farm Bill).  PLC yields may be updated on a covered commodity-by-covered commodity basis using FSA form [CCC-867](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?data=02%7C01%7C%7Ca811e2c35dad490a0eab08d82f17622b%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C637311124761316315&reserved=0&sdata=qqxGkP2OdPZ%2FI4OaRn61%2FP%2Ba2YAtDyx0cRWTgcbvoqo%3D&url=https%3A%2F%2Femso-sa.fsa.usda.gov%2Fdps%2Fservices%2Fdownloadhandler.ashx%3Ffileid%3D36495%26utm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery).    For more information, reference resources and decision tools, visit [farmers.gov/arc-plc](https://www.farmers.gov/arc-plc?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery). Contact your local Farm Service Agency Office for assistance – [farmers.gov/service-center-locator](http://www.farmers.gov/service-center-locator?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery).  Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to attend or participate in any meeting/event/function should contact Mary Anne Coffin at 207-990-9140 or Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339.  All USDA Service Centers are open for business, including some that are open to visitors to conduct business in person by appointment only. All Service Center visitors wishing to conduct business with the Farm Service Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service, or any other Service Center agency should call ahead and schedule an appointment. Service Centers that are open for appointments will pre-screen visitors based on health concerns or recent travel and visitors must adhere to social distancing guidelines. Visitors may also be required to wear a face covering during their appointment. Field work will continue with appropriate social distancing. Our program delivery staff will be in the office, and they will be working with our producers in office, by phone, and using online tools. More information can be found at [farmers.gov/coronavirus](http://www.farmers.gov/coronavirus?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery).  USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users). |